

**PTEROMALUS PUPARUM (L.) (HYM.: PTEROMALIDAE), A CHALCID
NEW TO IRELAND**

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Pteromalus puparum (L.) (Pteromalidae) is recorded for the first time from Ireland.

Pteromalus puparum (L.) is a well-known primary parasitoid of the pupae of Lepidoptera, particularly Rhopalocera. In Europe, it most often attacks *Pieris* spp. and *Nymphalis* spp., but also parasitises *Papilio machaon* L., *Aglais urticae* (L.), *Vanessa cardui* (L.), *V. atalanta* (L.), other butterflies and moths. Species of Vespidae and Sphecidae (Hymenoptera) are also hosts. In addition, *P. puparum* is a hyperparasitoid of some Ichneumonoidea and chalcids. It is widely distributed, occurring in Asia, Australia, Europe, Madeira Islands, the Middle East, New Zealand, North and South Africa, North and South America (Graham, 1969; Noyes, 1998). In Britain, it is an abundant and widespread species, often troublesome in infesting captive breeding stocks of butterflies (Askew & Shaw, 1997). As a result, after preparing a catalogue of the Irish Chalcidoidea (O'Connor, Nash & Bouček, 2000), it was a surprise to discover that such an ubiquitous parasitoid was not recorded from Ireland.

Recently while sorting collections of miscellaneous and mostly unnamed insects in store-boxes in the Natural History Museum, Dublin, the author discovered numerous Irish specimens of *P. puparum*. The material was determined or its identity confirmed using Graham (1969), Bouček & Rasplus (1991), Askew & Shaw (1997). The records are as follows:

CORK: Roches Hotel, Glengarriff (V 9256), 29 July 1943, numerous ♂♂ ♀♀ emerged from pupae of *Vanessa atalanta*, J. E. Flynn; same locality, no date, numerous ♂♂ ♀♀ emerged from pupae of *Inachis io* (L.), J. E. Flynn.

DOWN: Warrenpoint (J 1418), 7 August 1928, 9♀♀ reared from *Aglais urticae*, labelled as *Pteromalus puparum*, W. F. Johnson.

Little seems to be known about Flynn and he is not mentioned by Praeger (1949). A hotel proprietor in Glengarriff, his main interest was birds and he discovered the first Irish firecrest (Flynn & Mitchell, 1944). Between 1929 and 1943 he was the author of nine entomological notes, mostly on migrant butterflies (Ryan, O'Connor & Beirne, 1984). He sent the reared specimens of *P. puparum* to the National Museum (NMI 9: 1944). Despite being registered as Ichneumon flies, they were labelled as chalcids and stored loose in paper envelopes pinned in the corner of a store-box. By contrast, Rev. Johnson was a well-known Irish entomologist. He became one of the two most voluminous publishers on the insects of Ireland, working on many orders of insect (Beirne, 1985). After his death, the Museum

purchased his hymenopteran collection in 1934. Subsequently, his specimens of *P. puparum* must have been transferred from that collection into the box of miscellanea where they were found.

References

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An accidental introduction of a microlepidopteran to Berkshire?

For some time now I have been engaged in rearing species of bagworm moths (Lep.: Psychidae). One such species, *Dahlica triquetrella* (Hb.), was reared during 1997 and 1998 from material originating from Orpington, Kent (*Br. J. ent. nat. Hist.* **12**: 29-30), adults of the F₁ generation emerging during February and March 1998. The known distribution of this insect in Great Britain is very restricted, being found in West Kent (VC 16), Westmoreland and North Lancashire (VC 69) and recently in South Essex (VC 18). Hence I was very surprised, and somewhat sceptical, to find cased larvae of this species ascending three short lengths of brick wall at the far end of my road here in Reading during the late summer of 2001. Positive identification of the species involved was achieved by analysing the DNA from one larva.

On 8 September, at 19.30 hours, I noticed the first of these larvae. Three further examples were found the following evening at 16.30 hours, and individual larvae on 10 September at 18.00 hours, 11 September at 18.30 hours and 12 September at 18.30 hours. Despite nightly checks being made, there then followed a break of around a week, which coincided with cool wet weather, until 20 September, when a further example was found on the same stretch of wall at 18.00 hours. The weather by this time was much warmer and drier, as it had been on previous occasions when larvae were found. The following night a further larva was found at 17.30 hours, followed by two more on 24 September at 21.00 hours. The weather turned cold and wet again, and it was not until it warmed up that more were found. One larva was found on 6 October at 17.00 hours, one on 9 October at 17.30 hours, one on 19 October at 19.00 hours, one on 22 October at 18.00 hours and the final one on 31 October at 21.00 hours. In total, 17 larvae were found over a period of approximately one month.